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ABSTRACT

This report represents a summary of the results of the evaluation of the Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP) conducted from February 1993 through October 1994. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the degree to which CLASP was successful in reaching its three project goals: (1) to establish library use among students at the critical early stages of their intellectual development; (2) to organize public librarians, parents, and school personnel in cooperative activities that encourage the productive use of library resources; and (3) to develop models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration that could be replicated elsewhere. This report summarizes and synthesizes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented throughout the evaluation process and documented in 10 reports and other documents. For three evaluation studies based on on-site data collection, this report includes the project objectives, design methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The initial evaluation plan and the selection of sites and instruments is also described. A summary of other activities carried out to supplement or improve the evaluation effort and to enable the project to be carried successfully beyond the pilot phase is also provided. The evaluation showed that CLASP had considerable success in reaching the first formal project goal, to establish library use among children. For the second goal, there was some effort but little success project-wide due to various constraints. CLASP made little progress toward the third goal, to develop models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration. The report ends with a general assessment of CLASP and recommendations for improving it as it moves toward self-sufficiency and expansion. Seven tables illustrate data, and a 12-page appendix provides a detailed discussion of the evaluation project's methodology. (Contains 15 references.) (MAS)

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ED 382 199

Evaluation

of the

Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP)

Report #7

Final Report

Submitted to:

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DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund

Foreword

In 1991, the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund initiated a three-year, $3.6 million project called CLASP (Connecting Libraries and Schools Project) to promote collaborative programs among the New York Public Library, New York City public schools and neighborhood organizations. A total of 107 schools from three New York City school districts and 23 branch libraries were involved in this effort.

In February 1993, the Fund hired an evaluation team from Information Management Consultant Services, Inc. to conduct an evaluation of the final 20 months of the project. While the evaluation was more heavily focused on CLASP activities that took place over the summer months and less on what transpired during the full academic year, there was sufficient data collected for reaching some overarching conclusions about the strengths of the program and areas for improvement.

The Fund is making the project's final evaluation report and a separate report, "Library Collaborations: A Literature Analysis to Aid the Evaluation of the Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP)," available over ERIC to help inform others about the potential for similar partnership efforts involving public schools and libraries.

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We especially note the assistance from staff at the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund: John Lanigan, Jr., Adam Stoll, Jane Quinn, and Annette Chin.

In addition, we greatly appreciate the involvement and contributions to the study from the principals, school leaders, and community members throughout the New York City School District who cooperated with this study.

Finally, IMCS thanks the Syracuse University School of Information Studies for its continuing support and interest in the project.

All of these individuals provided time and interest that supported evaluation activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a summary of the results of the evaluation of the Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP) conducted from February 1993 through October 1994 by Information Management Consultants, Inc. (IMCS). The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the degree to which CLASP was successful in reaching its three project goals:

- To establish library use among students at the critical early stages of their intellectual development;
- To organize public librarians, parents, and school personnel in cooperative activities that encourage the productive use of library resources; and
- To develop models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration that could be replicated elsewhere.

This report summarizes and synthesizes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations presented throughout the evaluation process and documented in ten reports and other documents. For three evaluation studies based on on-site data collection, conducted during summer 1993, fall 1993, and summer 1994, this report includes the project objectives, design methodology, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. In addition, the report describes the initial evaluation plan and the selection of sites and instruments.

This report also contains a summary of other IMCS activities carried out to supplement or improve the evaluation effort and to enable CLASP/NYPL to carry the project successfully beyond the pilot phase. These activities include, among others, an analysis of circulation, workshops for CLASP/NYPL staff, and an in-depth study of school-library collaboration. The report ends with our general assessment of CLASP and recommendations for improving CLASP as it moves toward self-sufficiency and expansion.

CLASP was remarkable in being one of the first projects to involve cooperation between a large urban public library system and public schools in a sustained and systematic manner. The evaluation showed that CLASP had considerable success in reaching the first formal project goal, to establish library use among children. For the second goal, to organize public librarians, parents, and school personnel in cooperative activities, there was some effort but limited success project-wide due to various constraints. CLASP made little progress toward the third goal, to develop models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration. Despite some limitations, however, it should be noted that CLASP did secure funding to carry it beyond its pilot phase; this fact alone attests to the success of the project.

Overall, the evaluation resulted in the following conclusions:

- CLASP programs reached thousands of users who might not otherwise have attended the library; these users were highly satisfied with CLASP.
- The impact of CLASP centered on the number of programs offered, rather than the type, and few differences were noted between CLASP and non-CLASP library programs.
- CLASP succeeded in raising schools' and the larger community's awareness of the library, although there was general unfamiliarity with CLASP itself.
- Teachers were enthusiastic about CLASP, but their involvement was not systematic or fundamental to program activities.
- Participants felt CLASP activities were beneficial, and there was some evidence of increased library use as a result of CLASP.
- CLASP succeeded in bringing ethnically diverse and underserved users into the library, but programs often failed to create links to books, reading, or library services.

Based on these conclusions and the fuller discussion of CLASP presented in the final report, this report offers four key recommendations for successful continuation of the project:

- CLASP should continue efforts to improve visibility and actively promote its successes to secure the support of the community, library administration, and city officials.
- CLASP should develop a full understanding of the needs of schools and teachers and ensure that services and resources supplement established educational goals.
- Collaboration must involve librarians working side-by-side with teachers to establish program goals that reflect joint planning, mutual benefit, and relevance to all audiences.
- CLASP programming should always create links to books, reading, information use, and/or library services.

CLASP proved to be an important initiative. It showed that libraries can make significant contributions to strengthening local communities, promoting education, and offering a range of support to the community not otherwise available. The findings and lessons resulting from this 20-month evaluation may be useful to funding agencies wishing to work with local governments, schools, and libraries developing similar projects.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview of CLASP

In 1991 the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund initiated a three-year pilot program to generate local collaborative programming among the New York Public Library (NYPL), community schools, and neighborhood organizations. This new library-school partnership, called Connecting Libraries and Schools Project (CLASP), had three goals:

1. To establish library use among students at the critical early stages of their intellectual development, helping them become better students, independent learners and lifelong readers.

2. To organize teachers, parents, public librarians, school librarians, and school administrators in ongoing cooperative activities that encourage the productive use of library resources to further children's education and family literacy.

3. To develop a variety of models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration that could be replicated in other districts and eventually throughout New York City with public funding.

CLASP operated in three New York City school districts: District 6 in Manhattan, District 8 in the Bronx, and District 31 in Staten Island. Twenty-three branch libraries were involved: four in Manhattan, eight in the Bronx, and eleven in Staten Island. A total of 107 schools from the three districts also participated. CLASP established an office in one of the participating branch libraries in each district and employed two librarians who worked from each office. The CLASP Director worked from a central office and oversaw all program activities. Each CLASP district also had an advisory committee comprising school and public librarians, CLASP personnel, teachers, and parents. These committees met periodically throughout the course of the program to discuss the role of CLASP in their districts and the needs of various constituencies.

The majority of CLASP's resources went into programming for participating branch libraries and schools. Programs targeted at young children and their parents, young teens, speakers of English as a second language, disadvantaged people, and others were offered not only at the libraries and schools, but also at homeless shelters, summer camps, Head Start centers, and other community sites. Typical activities included:

- Parent Workshops. CLASP librarians read several stories appropriate for pre-school children to an audience of parents and their children at a Head Start center. They give the parents tips on reading aloud and show the parents how to do a simple craft project with their children, based on a theme from one of the stories read. They also distribute packets of library information.

- Class Visits. CLASP librarians visit a summer school class of elementary students. They read some books and discuss the public library. They distribute bookmarks, letters for the children's parents, and library card registration forms. They also give information packets to the teachers.

- Craft Programs. A CLASP librarian conducts a session at the library in which elementary school students make their own "pop-up" books. The librarian encourages the children to sign up for the summer reading program.

In addition to special programs, CLASP provided material support to participating libraries. The program paid for thousands of books to supplement branch collections. Through a competitive program, CLASP issued "mini-grants" to teachers in public and non-public schools to implement special projects consistent with the goals of CLASP.

CLASP attempted to link two critical resources—schools and libraries. This type of connection has the potential to develop and strengthen:

- Collaborative programs that enhance educational opportunities for students;

- Family literacy and parent involvement in their child's reading and learning; and

- Local community ties to schools and libraries.

Successful strategies for school/public library collaboration demonstrated by the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund CLASP pilot program may serve as models for program replication throughout New York City and other large urban areas. Libraries have a major role to play in meeting the national goals for education (Stripling, 1992; U.S. Congress, 1994). Projects like CLASP, aimed at coordinating activities of libraries, schools, and community agencies, directly address national concerns for improving education and meeting the needs of a diverse, multicultural population.

Scope of Evaluation

In February 1993, DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund hired an evaluation team from Information Management Consultant Services, Inc. (IMCS) to conduct an evaluation of the final 20 months of the CLASP pilot program. IMCS' original proposal to the Fund outlined an empirically-based evaluation using multiple methods and multiple comparisons to assess key populations within the context of CLASP's many programs and services (Information Management Consultants, Inc., March 23, 1993). The project goal was to contribute to both a formative and summative evaluation of the CLASP pilot project.

While the initial evaluation plan called for four formal studies, DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund decided early in 1994 to redirect the efforts of the IMCS team. The Fund based its decision in part on the fact that the first three evaluation studies had clearly established ways in which CLASP was successful and areas where improvement could be realized. During the summer and fall of 1994, therefore, IMCS administered activities to help CLASP improve its ability to meet program goals. These activities included four workshops for CLASP staff, interviews with school administrators about collaboration, an in-depth study of inter-institutional collaboration, and a memo describing ways for CLASP staff to approach Goal 3 (development of models). Finally, there were some smaller projects, carried out prior to summer 1994, supplementing the formal evaluation process. These included the creation of computer databases to record CLASP activities, micro-case evaluations (in-depth examination of programs to determine critical success factors), and an analysis of the circulation of summer reading program materials.

The evaluation efforts resulted in ten reports submitted to DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund by IMCS:

- *Report #1: Evaluation Plan* (submitted March 23, 1993), describing the evaluation strategy for the final 20 months of the CLASP pilot program;
- *Formative Recommendation Regarding CLASP Reporting* (submitted June 14, 1993), discussing the reasons to establish uniform reporting methods and the possible uses of activity data to be collected;
- *Report #2: Instruments, Site Selection, Monthly Reports* (submitted June 18, 1993), providing detailed description of the format and nature of existing reports provided to the evaluation team, IMCS' organization and use of the data, and formative recommendations for CLASP reporting;
- *Report #3: Evaluation of the CLASP Summer 1993 Program* (submitted September 30, 1993), evaluating the summer 1993 CLASP program activities in terms of extensiveness, satisfaction, benefit, effectiveness, improvement, and management dimensions of the activities;
- *Report #4: Evaluation of the CLASP Fall 1993 Program* (submitted December 1993), describing the results and analysis of the fall 1993 IMCS data collection, which focused primarily on the management of CLASP and collaboration between libraries and schools;
- *CLASP Circulation Data—Revised Report* [memo] (submitted April 12, 1994), presenting the results of an analysis of book circulation to determine whether the CLASP summer reading program was successful in promoting book use;

- *CLASP: Collaboration Analysis: Interviews with School Administrators, May 1994* (submitted June 2, 1994), reporting on interviews conducted with senior-level administrative officers from CLASP school districts to understand their perspectives toward collaboration;

- *Developing Models of CLASP Programming* [memo] (submitted May 31, 1994), describing ways to approach the third program goal, to develop a variety of models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration;

- *Report #5: Evaluation of the CLASP Summer 1994 Program* (submitted August 15, 1994), assessing the degree to which CLASP was able to institutionalize recommendations from previous reports, particularly in regard to innovativeness, collaboration with the schools, and ability to reach diverse audiences; and

- *Report #6: Library Collaboration: A Literature Analysis to Aid the Evaluation of CLASP* (submitted August 1994), identifying success factors and barriers in inter-institutional collaboration and applying those factors in a discussion of success and failure in CLASP.

This, the final report issued by IMCS, reviews the range of evaluation activities carried out between February 1993 and October 1994. For the three formal evaluation studies, this report describes the approaches taken, sampling and data collection methods, the types of variables that were measured, and the methods used to measure those variables. The report also describes supplementary activities conducted by IMCS. Finally, this report synthesizes the conclusions made throughout the 20-month evaluation process and offers key recommendations for the improvement of CLASP.

METHODOLOGY

For all three evaluation studies (summer 1993, fall 1993, and summer 1994), the method employed a range of data collection techniques. These included collecting and organizing existing CLASP data, and conducting on-site observations, user surveys, focus group and individual interviews, and telephone interviews. The initial evaluation plan was set forth in *Report #1: Evaluation Plan* (IMCS, March 23, 1993). The actual techniques employed for each study varied, however, according to the particular evaluation objectives at the time each study was conducted and the concerns of the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.*

IMCS carried out the summer 1993 evaluation as specified in the initial evaluation plan. A firm conclusion which arose from this first evaluation was that CLASP program activities were well-conducted and well-received. With this established, IMCS redirected the following two evaluation studies to focus on other issues. The fall 1993 evaluation focused primarily on the management of CLASP and the collaboration between libraries and schools. The summer 1994 evaluation assessed the degree to which CLASP was able to institutionalize recommendations from previous reports, specifically with respect to innovativeness, collaboration with schools, and ability to reach diverse and underserved populations.

Early in 1994, the Fund, in consultation with IMCS, decided to shift the focus of the remaining evaluation efforts to the matter of *improvement*. CLASP programs had already been found to be generally satisfying and beneficial, and they were expected to remain so. Instead, the evaluation team would focus on ways to assist CLASP in improving its performance for the remaining months of the pilot phase and in preparing for continuation beyond the pilot. As a result, on-site interviews with school administrators regarding collaboration replaced the complete on-site evaluation originally planned for spring 1994. A final on-site data collection for the summer 1994 program allowed comparison with summer 1993 findings and an assessment of year-to-year improvement. IMCS concluded its service to CLASP program by administering four workshops for CLASP librarians and administrators and completing an in-depth study of inter-institutional collaboration.

Overall, the CLASP evaluation concerned itself with three general types of objectives:

1. Objectives relating public libraries and public schools—especially those emphasizing increased and more varied use of public libraries by students and teachers; better integration of educational activities with public library resources; and improved communication, collaboration, and commitment between school professionals and library professionals;

* IMCS modified the evaluation plan with the advice and consultation of Dr. John Lanigan, Jr., Director of Evaluation for the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

2. Objectives relating children and their families—especially those focusing on better use of the public libraries by students and their families; and

3. Objectives relating public libraries and their communities—especially those which affect school-library cooperation.

The appendix to this report offers a detailed discussion of the evaluation methodology, including specific factors examined during each formal evaluation period, the study design, and a discussion of sampling, instruments used, and limitations encountered.

RESULTS/CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This section contains a general description of the findings of the summer 1993, fall 1993, and summer 1994 evaluations, organized by theme or "dimension." For a more complete description of the findings for the three formal studies, including quantitative data, a sampling of interview responses, evaluators' descriptions of activities observed, and testimonials, see the individual evaluation reports (IMCS, September 30, 1993; IMCS, December 1993; IMCS, August 1994a).

The summer 1993 evaluation was a general examination of program quality and success. The fall 1993 evaluation focused on management issues. The summer 1994 evaluation considered whether CLASP had been able to improve in some critical areas based on previous recommendations. (For a full description of the way each evaluation was conducted, see the appendix to this report.) Table 1 shows the dimensions, or themes, which provided the focus for each evaluation.

Dimensions of Study	Evaluation Period		
	Summer 1993	Fall 1993	Summer 1994
Extensiveness	•	•	•
Satisfaction	•		•
Benefit	•		•
Effectiveness	•	•	
Management	•	•	
Improvement	•	•	
Critical Success Factors		•	
Innovativeness		•	•
Collaboration		•	•
Diversity			•

Table 1. Dimensions of Study by Evaluation Period

Extensiveness

Definition: Number, type, and locations of CLASP activities and attendance at those activities.

Monthly activity logs supplied data on the extensiveness of CLASP programming for summer and fall 1993. Individual activity reporting forms supplied data for summer 1994. (There was some difficulty in comparing program information from one period to another because of changes in reporting procedures.) During July 1993, there were 129

programs attracting 2,948 participants. Fall 1993 (September through November) included 311 programs and 12,992 attendees. For July 1994, records show 105 activities and 2,795 participants. Tables 2 and 3 describe number and types of activities offered, with attendance, for the three evaluation periods.

The evaluation team expected to see some improvement, based on past evaluation recommendations, in programs offered during summer 1994. There were some new types of programs in 1994, including hands-on activities and entertainment events. Sixteen reported activities for July 1994 were "outsourced," that is, presented by outside talent hired by the library. This compares with nine outsourced programs offered during July 1993. Attendance of young adults, a target audience, rose slightly from 26 and in July 1993 to 65 in July 1994.

Type of Activity	# of Activities *				Attendance *				Location *		
	Total	District 6	District 8	District 31	Total	District 6	District 8	District 31	Library	Schools	Other
Classes Visited in Schools	45 (79)	12 (14)	1 (22)	32 (43)	1024 (1499)	350 (301)	45 (423)	629 (775)	0 (0)	45 (79)	0 (0)
Read Aloud/Storytelling	16 (26)	6 (5)	5 (3)	5 (16)	665 (508)	283 (270)	225 (172)	157 (221)	6 (10)	0 (5)	10 (11)
Parent Workshops	11 (9)	0 (4)	5 (5)	6 (4)	142 (130)	0 (53)	69 (58)	73 (19)	1 (2)	8 (5)	2 (6)
Craft/Hands-on Activities	27 (9)	4 (0)	7 (0)	16 (9)	601 (211)	93 (0)	195 (0)	313 (211)	25 (9)	1 (0)	1 (0)
CLASP at a Community Activity	3 (2)	1 (0)	1 (2)	1 (0)	248 (600)	80 (0)	83 (600)	85 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (2)
Entertainment	3 (0)	1 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	115 (0)	62 (0)	53 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
TOTAL	105 (129)	24 (25)	21 (32)	60 (72)	2795 (2948)	868 (469)	670 (1253)	1257 (1226)	35 (21)	54 (89)	16 (19)

* Summer 1993 figures given in parentheses; both periods include the month of July only.

Table 2. Type of Activity by Number, Attendance, and Location, Summer 1994 (Including Summer 1993 Data)

Although it was not the purpose of the evaluation studies to report complete program statistics, it is interesting to note that during its second year, CLASP offered 1,232 programs to a total user audience of 23,896 children, parents, and teachers (NYPL and Branch Libraries, November 15, 1993). The total number of activities carried out during

the year was higher than the number of activities originally planned in every category except teacher workshops and staff development sessions. CLASP purchased 60,928 items and allocated them among the 23 participating branches.

Type of Activity	# of Activities				Attendance			
	Total	District 6	District 8	District 31	Total	District 6	District 8	District 31
Classes Visited in Schools	141	35	79	27	4249	1121	1897	1231
Read Aloud/Storytelling	38	23	5	10	1301	622	256	423
Parent Workshops	27	13	9	5	891	354	350	187
Teacher Workshops/ School Librarian Visits	26	11	9	6	533	379	22	132
CLASP at a Community Activity	50	9	28	13	1900	157	1423	320
Open School Nights	21	2	18	1	3100	2000	1000	100
Staff Development	8	6	0	2	1018	418	0	600
TOTAL	311	99	148	64	12992	5051	4948	2993

Table 3. Type of Activity by Number and Attendance, Fall 1993

Programs during the evaluation periods included class visits, parent workshops, storytelling/read aloud programs, attendance at community events, craft programs and summer reading clubs (for both summer periods), Open School Night displays (during the fall), and entertainment events (during summer 1994).

During the course of the evaluation, it became apparent that NYPL was the first large urban library system to implement an outreach program as extensive as CLASP. It was difficult, therefore, to compare the nature and extent of CLASP programming to the outreach of other urban libraries. In the experience of the evaluation team, however, it is clear that CLASP did offer many more programs, especially outside of the library, than is typical of similar library systems. CLASP allowed NYPL to serve thousands of people who might not otherwise have used the library.

Conclusions about extensiveness:

- Many of the activities offered were primarily for children and their parents, especially during summer 1993. The number of activities varied by district

and by type, perhaps reflecting fundamental differences in service populations.

- CLASP appeared to have limited success in reaching older children (i.e., those beyond elementary school), at-risk students, and other special populations. However, there was a slight increase in young adults attending programs during summer 1994.

- The impact of the CLASP programs appeared to center more on the *number* of activities, rather than the *type* of such activities, because both CLASP and non-CLASP libraries sponsored many of the same type.

- In comparison to non-CLASP libraries, CLASP libraries did offer more options for adults, more contact with community agencies, and a larger number of activities.

- CLASP met or exceeded projected goals in terms of number of activities and number of attendees, except in the area of teacher workshops and staff training sessions. The small number of teacher workshops was partly due to the delays in beginning the school year, and partly due to inadequate communication between CLASP and schools.

- There were fewer activities reported for summer 1994 than for summer 1993, and attendance was correspondingly less. Inconsistent reporting procedures may have resulted in slightly inaccurate program statistics.

- Interactive programs, involving crafts and other hands-on activities, increased in all districts during summer 1994.

- There was an increase in the number of programs presented by outside talent (non-library people hired to present library programs) in summer 1994. In general, the outsourced programs were not designed for CLASP; they were arranged by the NYPL Office of Children's Services and repeated throughout the library system with both CLASP and non-CLASP libraries.

Satisfaction

Definition: Participants' reactions to CLASP activities, including the degree to which they believed CLASP activities met their needs.

User surveys and telephone interviews conducted during the summer 1993 evaluation included questions about satisfaction. The evaluation team distributed surveys at 52 activities representing all three districts, which elicited the responses of 751 patrons (706 youth and 59 adults). Results indicated that respondents were overwhelmingly satisfied with the activities or events in which they participated. Among children, 98% liked the activity, 94% felt it was interesting, 92% said they would like to participate

again, and 88% believed their friends would like it. Of the adult respondents, 90% felt the activity was enjoyable, 85% found it to be very interesting, 87% showed interest in coming to similar activities, 85% thought the activity had taken the appropriate amount of time, and 95% felt the appropriate amount of information had been presented. CLASP librarians interviewed by telephone expressed the opinion that CLASP had a positive effect on their level of satisfaction with their ability to perform professionally. Librarians also appreciated the additional resources purchased by CLASP. One stated, "The librarian doesn't have to tell them there's nothing...they walk out with something in their hands."

Because a high level of satisfaction had been so clearly established in the summer of 1993, this theme was not studied in the fall and was looked at as a secondary concern only during the summer 1994 evaluation. Observation of activities in summer 1994 showed that participants were interested and involved, and that they expressed a similar level of satisfaction with both "non-capacity" and "capacity"* activities. In interviews, parents stated that they believed their children liked these activities, that their children were learning, and that the activities promoted creativity and library interest. Interviews with outside talent (people hired to present library programs) indicated that they believed participants were satisfied with the activities.

Conclusions about satisfaction:

- Teachers, librarians, parents, and participants seemed highly satisfied with the CLASP activities in all three districts for both summer 1993 and summer 1994. This was true for every type of respondent and all facets of satisfaction considered.

- Adults appreciated CLASP services and the increased resources available as a result of the program. They expressed the wish that access to these programs and resources be improved so that more families could benefit from CLASP.

- The great majority of participants judged the content of CLASP activities to be appropriate and pleasing, despite the difficult physical conditions of some of the presentation sites.

- Branch library staff were highly satisfied with the enhanced collections made possible by CLASP, because the additional materials helped them fill chronic demands.

* "Capacity" refers to the activities chosen for observation in summer 1994 because the CLASP Director felt they best demonstrated CLASP's capacity to implement improvements based on past suggestions. "Non-capacity" refers to the "ordinary" activities selected and observed by the evaluation team during summer 1994.

Benefit

Definition: The way(s) in which CLASP activities contributed to the quality of life for participants.

As with satisfaction, the IMCS team assessed benefit most closely during the summer 1993 evaluation, when it was found to be generally positive. There are some particular difficulties in judging benefit, which can be either immediate or delayed, direct or indirect. These difficulties are particularly at issue in assessing the benefits of library programs for children. The tangible benefits of using the library, enjoying book talks, and starting to read are not likely to become manifest immediately. Similarly, if library programs for parents are effective, the benefits and changes in attitude will accrue to their children, but usually after some time has passed. Therefore, benefits noted here may be different from what they would be if the questions were asked in the future.

Of 706 children who participated in surveys, 91% said they had learned something during the CLASP activity, and 85% found the activity useful or helpful. Of the 59 adult respondents, 88% thought the activity had been useful or helpful, and 95% believed the amount of information provided at their activity was appropriate. Of eight librarians interviewed by telephone, six believed CLASP activities were moderately to very educational and useful for their patrons. Two others believed the library's ability to purchase more materials, with CLASP funding, was very important for the quality of public service. Observations of CLASP activities also showed positive evidence of benefit to users, such as immediate registration for library cards and selection of books to take home. Interviewees agreed that CLASP had a positive impact on students and parents, especially in introducing people to libraries, teaching library use and stimulating interest in using libraries, providing useful information services, and reinforcing the importance of reading for children and adults.

In general, respondents saw the summer 1994 capacity activities (i.e. "improved" activities selected for observation by the CLASP Director) as helpful and useful for a variety of reasons from assisting children in expressing their inner feelings, to helping them when doing research activities in school, to having a useful product to take home. They saw a film-making project with special education students as an opportunity for students to be involved in something that was motivating and allowed them to use artistic and creative talent in new ways, as well as to practice communication and conceptual skills. Non-capacity activities (i.e. "ordinary" activities similar to those offered in the past) evoked similar responses, with parents noting that some program activities were related to things their children did at home, and that the programs helped their children become comfortable with the library. Following a storytelling program, one child said, "It helps you learn to do storytelling and makes you use your imagination...you get a picture inside your mind." (He had used the skills learned in the library's storytelling programs to win a storytelling contest for children.)

Conclusions about benefit:

- In both July 1993 and July 1994, youth and adult participants found CLASP activities largely beneficial and were able to name ways in which the experience gained at a CLASP program might carry over into their home, school, or work life.

- Both teachers and CLASP staff felt that activities benefited the participants in terms of enjoyment and information in about equal measure.

- CLASP participants reported at least some short-term benefits, although their satisfaction with the overall CLASP experience was somewhat greater than their perception of benefits received.

- Librarians considered CLASP's ability to provide additional resources and support personnel to be among the most important benefits.

- Supporting reading for pleasure and providing access to a larger stock of materials appear to have been key benefits for students and parents alike. The programs also gave parents new skills and ideas for encouraging reading and language development in their children.

- Many parents and teachers showed an immediate interest in following up upon their CLASP experience, suggesting that the programs were beneficial to them (e.g. teachers immediately scheduled class library visits, parents borrowed books the same day, etc.).

- Despite increased frequency in CLASP activities, there appeared to be no difference between the impact of CLASP and non-CLASP activities on their respective audiences, as judged by librarians in different institutions.

Effectiveness

Definition: Extent to which the activity achieved the goals of CLASP.

There was considerable evidence of success in terms of Goal 1 (establish library use among children) during summer 1993. The high levels of perceived satisfaction and benefit attested to the fact that CLASP had a positive effect on users. Observations revealed that programs did encourage student library use, by familiarizing children with the library, giving them library card applications, exciting them about reading, introducing them to storytelling, etc. One principal commented, "The kids feel like they [CLASP staff] had to shut down everything to come and visit them, so it makes them feel special." User surveys showed that people considered the library to be more accessible and attractive to them after attending CLASP activities, with a large majority of adults and youth indicating interest in attending more programs.

The fall 1993 evaluation also found CLASP to be highly successful in terms of Goal 1. Advisory committees in all three districts mentioned that CLASP brought new children and adult patrons into the library, that the added materials were crucial to the ability to serve them, that parent outreach was important and effective, and that the summer reading lists were a successful means of promoting reading for pleasure. Adults were enthusiastic after learning what resources were available through the library and expressed an interest in returning. Children and teachers enjoyed the storytelling sessions very much. During the September through November period, 2,856 library cards were issued to attendees of CLASP programs.

In terms of Goal 2 (organize librarians, parents, and school personnel in cooperative activities), the summer 1993 evaluation found that CLASP succeeded in part. Branch librarians believed the cooperation and support they received from CLASP personnel were significant, although programs presented in libraries sometimes showed insufficient coordination between CLASP and library staff. The level of cooperation between libraries and schools varied. There was little evidence of jointly planned and executed programs. Some teachers did feel that the program contributed to coordination between school, home, and library by encouraging student use of the library, and they appreciated the help of CLASP in terms of resource selection and program ideas.

The fact that many programs took place in schools contributed to Goal 2, because CLASP personnel were brought into contact with teachers and principals. Some librarians, however, felt that teachers questioned their authority. Finally, there was little direct evidence of CLASP's ability to make parents effective contributors to their children's education, but the favorable reaction of parents to CLASP programs suggested a positive effect.

The fall 1993 study found that CLASP satisfied Goal 2 to the extent that there were many library-sponsored activities in which the schools took some part. CLASP/NYPL management believed CLASP had demonstrated the importance of community outreach and had succeeded in raising schools' and the larger community's awareness of the library. Also, there was considerable evidence that parents and the community had an increased awareness of library resources as a result of CLASP. School program administrators believed CLASP enhanced the school program and had a positive effect on children and parents although, again, there was little in the way of cooperative programming between schools and libraries.

Conclusions about effectiveness:

- There was evidence that CLASP had a positive impact on family literacy for those attending CLASP activities.
- The quality of CLASP staff and support was high.

- CLASP staff were able to reach some community members who were not users of the library. In addition, librarians reported more children, teachers, and parents using the library.

- Because of CLASP, librarians in non-CLASP libraries demonstrated an increased interest in providing outreach programs and services.

- There did not appear to be much of a difference between CLASP and non-CLASP libraries in terms of how patrons reacted to library activities.

- Although branch libraries sponsored many of the same types of activities, CLASP appeared to approach them in a more systematic and aggressive fashion.

- While CLASP apparently made good progress in contacting students through activities, the teachers were generally unaware of the project. Word of the program may not have filtered down to teachers from the administrative level. Once having participated in CLASP, however, teachers were uniformly enthusiastic about the project.

- Many of the schools and community agencies scheduling parent workshops during the first year (at the invitation of CLASP) requested repeat performances for new clientele.

- Branch staff exhibited a high degree of support for CLASP despite their lack of personal experience with program activities. They believed that NYPL was engaged and interested in CLASP and that CLASP was making significant contributions to institutional priorities.

- There appeared to be some interaction between teachers and CLASP librarians for arranging and implementing activities. There was little evidence, however, that teachers were *regularly* involved in program design, either individually or in some other forum.

- Some decisions related to curriculum continued to be made autonomously by CLASP and library personnel with little or no consultation with students, teachers, or school administrators.

Management

Definition: Extent to which CLASP was well managed and well marketed. This theme included the decision making process, the organizational structure, the delineated authority and responsibilities within the organization, the cost-effectiveness of the program, and documentation supporting the structure.

In terms of management, the summer 1993 evaluation focused on awareness of CLASP by librarians, teachers, parents, and the public, as well as librarians' beliefs about the value of the project. Interviews revealed that these people were not consistently aware of CLASP. While librarians in both CLASP and control libraries said they knew about CLASP, school teachers and principals often had not heard of the program. Members of the public generally did not know about CLASP either, although they sometimes recognized CLASP librarians from activities. Among parents and children, some knew of CLASP activities through publicity at the schools, library bulletin boards, and local newspapers, but most were unaware of CLASP.

Regarding the value of the program, librarians believed that the sheer increase in resources made available through CLASP funding—multiple copies of books to support summer reading lists and school assignments, as well as reference books, magazine subscriptions, software, and equipment—was one of the most valuable benefits of the program. Librarians also appreciated the personnel support provided by CLASP. They noted that CLASP staff raised awareness about outreach, supplied programming ideas, helped ease the workload at the branches, and helped them meet their demand for activities, especially class visits.

The fall 1993 evaluation focused largely on the opinions of CLASP/NYPL management, school staff, and advisory board members. Management believed that CLASP provided a good model of cooperative service for the library system in general, as well as a variety of cooperative models for activities and projects. School staff said they faced barriers such as lack of flexible scheduling, lack of professional librarians, and inadequate resources. Members of the advisory committees believed CLASP money was well spent: 73% of respondents said that the average activity was worth $1000, 91% thought the activities were worth $500, and 100% thought the activities were worth at least $100 (23 respondents total). School program administrators noted that no program literature was available other than flyers for individual activities. Parents who were interviewed did not realize CLASP was distinct from other library activities, and school staff in two districts did not believe their administrators knew anything about CLASP.

Conclusions about management:

- Although the quality of general activity planning was solid, specific planning was often done at the last minute, hindering coordination, publicity, creativity, and scheduling.
- There was little follow-up or evaluation of specific programs to determine key success factors.
- Branch librarians saw CLASP as a way to extend their materials and personnel resources.

- There were instances of lack of awareness of CLASP, i.e. that specific activities were CLASP-sponsored. CLASP was better known among library and school professionals than among parents and children.

- There was little use of computer or developing information technologies in planning, presenting, or managing programs or activities.

- Many respondents identified CLASP librarians with NYPL rather than with CLASP. For the most part, the people served by CLASP were unaware that CLASP was the sponsor of these special programs, activities, and resources.

- CLASP began to demonstrate some of the potential of what the public librarian can do in terms of outreach and working with the schools. The successes of CLASP began to generate demand for comparable services and materials in non-CLASP libraries.

Improvement

Definition: Ways to maintain, correct, or improve CLASP procedures or activities, *from respondents' point of view*. (During summer 1994 this was studied in terms of three other themes, innovativeness, collaboration, and diversity, which are described below.)

Most suggestions for improvement during summer 1993 were minor. User comments included: reduce the length of a preschool story hour and select books of a higher level, publicize summer programs more widely and hold them earlier in the summer, provide more time for a craft project, make storytelling/booktalking sessions more enticing, etc. Micro-case studies (in-depth examination of programs to reveal factors contributing to success or failure) revealed that communication, cooperation, and coordination were the most critical factors in successful CLASP programming. Second in importance were resources to support the activities (e.g. refreshments, craft supplies, etc.). In general, most of the summer 1993 cases showed the potential to be successful, especially if CLASP/NYPL were to focus on improving the critical success factors identified in each case.

For the fall 1993 evaluation, advisory committee members were eager to expand current services to other areas, add new client groups or services to current CLASP activities, and, above all, to sustain CLASP in its current form. All expressed concern over the status of continuation funding, as well as the importance of increasing program awareness among high level school administrators and within the city political arena. Interviewees also noted that public awareness and program publicity needed improvement. A school librarian in District 6 stated that students would be more likely to go to the library from school if safety were improved (e.g. by bus transportation). Students thought class visits could be improved by using more CDs and videos, giving participants books to keep, showing them how to use computers, and providing resource lists. A school staff member thought the library ought to regularly share community information with teachers.

Conclusions about improvement:

- Adequate communication, cooperation, and coordination are essential to improving CLASP activities.
- Libraries and schools must increase communication to address curricular/instructional needs. Schools did not perceive themselves as full partners in collaboration; CLASP librarians had difficulty in obtaining information about curricular needs of schools.
- CLASP staff in the three districts wanted/needed more frequent opportunities to work together.
- CLASP must increase program publicity and boost public awareness.
- Inexpensive resources (e.g. refreshments, paper supplies, pamphlets) were often critical to successful implementation of activities.

Critical Success Factors

Definition. Extent to which the presence/absence of a factor determined the success/failure of an activity, *from the respondents' point of view.*

During interviews in the fall 1993 evaluation, CLASP/NYPL management named the following factors as critical to CLASP program success:

- Librarians must have excellent communication skills to work with students, parents, and teachers.
- Librarians must speak Spanish in certain districts.
- Libraries must be able to meet increasing demands for materials in a growing and diverse user community.
- Forums must bc established for schools and libraries to communicate.
- CLASP must be perceived as valuable to the schools in order to gain their commitment.
- Models to replicate CLASP programming must allow flexibility to adapt to local circumstances.
- Students should enjoy CLASP library visits.

- CLASP should aim to register every child visiting the library for a library card, which would give CLASP a powerful statistic to use for future funding.

School program administrators stressed the importance of good communication between CLASP and the school program director, continuity of events, the ability to create ties with schools and agencies to involve parents and children, and the need for dynamic CLASP librarians.

Conclusions about critical success factors:

- CLASP librarians must possess excellent communication and motivation skills.
- Advisory committees need to serve as forums for decision-making, suggesting new and innovative programming ideas rather than validating existing programs and services.
- School personnel (principal and teachers) need to be directly involved in decisions about program planning and implementation.

Innovativeness

Definition: Extent to which CLASP instituted new approaches or new programs.

The fall 1993 evaluation sought the opinions of teachers, librarians, and others about program innovativeness. School program administrators believed CLASP was innovative in general, and very innovative when it used special programs to bring parents and children into the library. Some respondents considered outreach (offering programs outside the library) to be innovative. Teachers believed CLASP was innovative in general and had stimulated children's interest in the library.

Others noted that the CLASP mini-grant program* had spurred creativity, allowing the schools to offer something different. In contrast to the opinions expressed in interviews, observation of some class visits by the evaluation team revealed that librarians were using standard, not innovative, approaches, and that these appeared to be of limited interest to the youth.

The summer 1994 evaluation examined innovativeness as one of three specific areas of program improvement. (The others were collaboration and diversity.) Capacity activities (i.e. "improved" activities specifically identified for observation by the CLASP Director) showed some evidence of innovation: some of the presenters made reference

* CLASP awarded "mini-grants" to teachers in public and non-public schools to implement special projects consistent with the goals of CLASP.

to school curriculum and consciously included activity skills related to the curriculum of early grades. Librarians in District 6 believed a program of Dominican music was the first event aimed at Spanish-speaking adults to be offered at their library. Parent interviews revealed that they thought a hands-on craft activity was innovative, as the programs they had seen in the past usually involved reading or singing only. The non-capacity activities (i.e. "ordinary" activities similar to those offered in the past) showed less evidence of innovation, although some programs were new and different in that they involved hands-on, participatory activities.

CLASP programs made few connections to educational or curricular goals, and CLASP librarians were not always able to help the children see those connections by stating or demonstrating them. Presenters often missed opportunities to extend the subject matter of the activities to stimulate children's imagination or to make connections to literature or library use. There was not always a CLASP representative at activities given by outside talent (i.e. non-library people hired to present library programs), and often the presenters made no attempt to identify CLASP or make a connection between the activity and library services and/or resources.

Capacity and non-capacity activities (designated as such during the summer 1994 evaluation to determine whether improvements had been made after past evaluations) showed little difference in innovativeness overall. One notable improvement was making many of the activities for young children more interactive.

Conclusions about innovativeness:

- Some programs were the first of their kind and brought new experiences to the participants.
- While the majority of the activities were book-oriented to some degree, presenters did not always make a strong connection between the activities presented and reading and literature appreciation or library resources.
- Through the schools, CLASP initiated new, innovative outreach programs for parents, such as parent workshops and Open School Night presentations.
- Teacher workshops and CLASP librarian visits to classrooms were unique to CLASP.
- Respondents perceived innovativeness as tailoring programs and services to meet the specific needs of a given community. Therefore, what was considered innovative in one community may not have been in another.

- The CLASP mini-grant program resulted in some highly creative and unique programs such as the "Let's Communicate" Symposium, a series of special activities culminating with an all-school assembly and visits to classrooms by various high-profile members of the community, including CLASP librarians.

- When outside talent (i.e. non-library people) presented library programs, there was insufficient connection to CLASP, to CLASP staff, and to library or project goals.

- Activities were often input-oriented (providing participants with resources) rather than process-oriented (stimulating participants to think and learn).

- Interactive programs for young children did not always make clear connections to library resources, reading, or books.

- Aside from including more interactive activities for children, capacity programs were not clearly more innovative than non-capacity programs.

Collaboration

Definition: Extent to which CLASP staff worked together effectively with teachers, administrators, parents, and community organizations to further the goals of the project.

During the literature analysis conducted in the summer of 1994, researchers discovered that many authors distinguish between *collaboration* and *cooperation* (see p. 29; also IMCS, August 1994b, p. 4-6). According to this scheme, collaboration is the more fundamental relationship, involving mutual planning, a goal that neither institution could achieve alone, joint acquisition of funds, formal channels of communication, shared management and control, and equivalent contributions of time and resources. In contrast, cooperation is a less demanding relationship, involving short-term work with limited goals, one organization providing leadership and obtaining funds, occasional sharing of information, and benefits accruing primarily to one institution. Those who planned and implemented CLASP did not clearly define the nature of the intended relationship between schools and libraries or consistently label it as either *collaboration* or *cooperation*. The opinions of people asked about collaboration during the fall 1993 and summer 1994 evaluations, therefore, reflect various assumptions about the meaning of the term and the type of school-library partnership CLASP was to develop.

CLASP/NYPL managers surveyed in fall 1993 rated collaboration as "adequate" to "successful." However, the collaboration was one-sided with schools passively receiving CLASP services. Advisory committee members believed that CLASP had improved rapport with teachers, that there was more library use by teachers, and that public librarians in general were learning more about how to work with schools. School program administrators felt that CLASP formed an important link between schools and

libraries; other school staff noted that schools were not involved in planning or goal setting for CLASP, but that CLASP did offer the assistance of professionals. A comparative interview between CLASP libraries and non-CLASP libraries in the New York Public Library system showed that CLASP institutions were engaging in more joint planning than non-CLASP institutions, but that cooperation was most evident in the delivery of activities. Furthermore, there was little regular communication between teachers and librarians about resources and curriculum.

The summer 1994 evaluation examined collaboration as one of three specific areas of program improvement. (The others were innovativeness and diversity.) The capacity activities (i.e. "improved" activities selected for observation by the CLASP Director) did show some evidence of collaboration. A film-making project, for example, involved ongoing work between a branch librarian and a classroom teacher and collaboration in planning, implementation, and follow up. In other activities observed, however, collaboration between schools and libraries involved joint scheduling only. Interviews with outside talent (i.e. non-library people hired to present library programs) revealed that they had not been told by the library that there were any specific goals or needs and therefore had not tailored their presentations to library concerns. Similarly, the non-capacity activities (i.e. "ordinary" activities similar to those offered in the past) showed little or no collaboration. Class and agency visits appear to have been coordinated with administrators with minimal involvement of teachers. In some programs using outside talent, the CLASP librarian was strictly an observer or was not present.

Conclusions about collaboration:

- Both libraries and schools perceived an increase in school-library collaboration on the activity level as a result of CLASP. Increased interaction created more extensive relationships between CLASP librarians and school personnel.

- Collaboration appeared to emphasize joint scheduling rather than planning and goal setting, design, delivery, and evaluation of activities. Collaboration was largely one-sided; either CLASP provided the services and the schools were passive recipients, or the schools requested activities and directed CLASP's involvement.

- CLASP enabled more collaborative or coordinated efforts to occur, but the success of those efforts and the nature of those efforts were not much different from what non-CLASP libraries reported they were doing with the schools. The presence of advisory committees was one clear difference between CLASP and non-CLASP collaboration with the schools.

- Within the schools, there were institutional barriers that affected collaboration efforts, such as inequitable distribution of resources among schools, failure of school libraries to receive state allotments for book purchases, and limited rewards and incentives for participation in CLASP.

- Some CLASP librarians were instrumental in helping teachers working as school librarians (who generally had no formal library training) to develop library collections and services.

- The advisory committees were well attended and perceived as the only formalized collaboration process between libraries and schools. However, they were dominated in number by CLASP and NYPL staff.

- CLASP staff made strong and consistent efforts to cooperate with community agencies to deliver services to disadvantaged populations at community sites.

- Although one program (film-making) reflected a relatively high degree of cooperative planning and implementation, there were no clear differences between capacity and non-capacity activities in terms of school-library collaboration.

Diversity

Definition: Extent to which CLASP programs drew audiences representative of the service districts, particularly underserved populations including older children (i.e. those beyond elementary school), at-risk students, people of various ethnic backgrounds, and people of different ages. (This theme was examined during summer 1994 only, and considered under the scope of program improvement.)

The summer 1994 evaluation examined diversity as one of three specific areas of program improvement. (The others were innovativeness and collaboration.) Of the capacity activities (i.e. "improved" activities selected for observation by the CLASP Director), some reached diverse audiences while others did not. Parents felt the library was successful in reaching out to people in the community who already frequented the library, but believed that non-users would have no way of learning about the programs because they had only seen the programs advertised within the library. A children's librarian noted that different types of activities attracted different groups of the targeted children. The programs directed at teens appear to have attracted the most diverse audiences in terms of ethnic makeup, age, and gender. Some at-risk and special education teens also participated in these activities. Teen attendance was slightly higher in summer 1994 than in summer 1993.

In non-capacity activities (i.e. "ordinary" activities similar to those offered in the past), the level of audience diversity was varied. A branch librarian in Staten Island said that her library was attracting more of the economically disadvantaged members of the community. Staff placed advertisements for activities primarily at branch libraries, where they would not be seen by non-users. Adults in Staten Island suggested offering activities on evenings or weekends in order to accommodate families with working parents. Parents also expressed a belief that library resources were better in the more

affluent districts and areas within districts; however, some believed the situation had improved since the advent of CLASP. One remarked, "we were ignored before, but now they're really reaching to everyone." Some parents felt that one of the most successful strategies CLASP used to reach out to the diverse groups within the community, especially non-English speaking people, was to visit the schools to introduce the children to the library and register them for cards.

Conclusions about diversity:

- CLASP had a positive impact on the equitable availability of resources to all populations served in CLASP districts.
- One of the most successful and well-received efforts to reach diverse audiences, particularly non-English speaking people, was visiting schools and registering children for library cards.
- CLASP reached out to Spanish-speaking communities by offering a significant number of programs in Spanish. Some programs, such as a Dominican music event, succeeded in attracting many non-users.
- Although some activities drew ethnically diverse audiences, others did not but might have done so with better promotion. Efforts to advertise activities in places where potential new audiences might be reached were inadequate.
- Overall, capacity programs (i.e. those "improved" activities selected for observation by the CLASP Director) were no more successful in reaching diverse audiences than non-capacity programs. Issues such as the need for adequate advertisement applied to both types of programs.

OTHER EVALUATION-RELATED EFFORTS

During the course of the evaluation period, IMCS conducted several activities supplementing the formal, on-site evaluation studies or otherwise related to the evaluation and improvement of CLASP. Several of these efforts were carried out during the summer and fall of 1994, after the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund decision that the evaluation effort should shift to include more direct interventions with CLASP/NYPL and provide the Fund with information from the CLASP pilot study that might be useful with future grantees. The additional evaluation-related activities included:

- Databases with activity and institutional information;
- A report on the improvement of reporting procedures;
- An analysis of circulation data for summer 1993;
- Micro-case evaluations;
- A memo describing ways to address Goal #3 (developing models of CLASP programming);
- Interviews with school administrators about collaboration;
- An in-depth study of school-library collaboration; and
- A series of workshops for CLASP/NYPL.

These activities assisted the evaluation team in completing and extending the original evaluation objectives.

Activities and Library Profile Databases

The IMCS team created two computer databases in the spring of 1993 to support their evaluation and program improvement efforts. One database was for activity information, and one was for institutional information. The rationale for developing the databases and sample reports from the databases are included in *Report #2: Instruments, Site Selection, Monthly Reports* (IMCS, June 18, 1993). The purpose of the databases was to provide baseline data, help create reports based on specific variables, and facilitate comparative analysis.

Activities Database. The activities database contained details on specific CLASP actions from the beginning of the project through April 1993. It recorded data obtained from existing monthly reports. To account for variations in the way such data was previously reported, IMCS chose the *activity* as the primary unit for organizing the data. The database comprised one record for each activity conducted by CLASP. Separate fields for audience, location, staff, etc. contained data specific to each activity record.

Library Profile Database. The institutional profiles database recorded data about all libraries involved with CLASP, as well as control libraries to be used in evaluation. The database included one record for each library, with data such as district, address, population breakdown, circulation, and budget entered in separate fields.

After inputting the initial batch of data into each database, IMCS gave the project to the CLASP Director and trained him in how to input data for further record keeping and analysis.

Report on the Improvement of Reporting Procedures

A document issued on June 14, 1993, *Formative Recommendation Regarding CLASP Reporting* (IMCS, June 14, 1993), covered the use of data reports provided by CLASP and NYPL. The report described the nature and format of the existing data, how they were being organized and used, and ways in which CLASP reporting could be improved. The issues identified in the report were those which drove the creation of the activities and institution databases (see above). The new databases were designed to make it possible to compare data from a range of sources; create reports that address specific questions; generate baseline data profiles of comparison to data collection undertaken by the evaluation team; and report data in a number of formats not presently available.

This memo suggested that a worksheet be designed that would allow all CLASP sites to report uniformly. The worksheet should provide room for narrative comments, including anecdotes, assessment of needs, problem identification, personal reflections, and self-evaluations.

Summer Reading Program Circulation Study

IMCS conducted a circulation analysis in summer 1993 to determine whether CLASP was effective in promoting book use through its summer reading programs (IMCS, April 12, 1994). The study included both CLASP and non-CLASP branches so that statistics could be compared. For the titles being studied, evaluators determined a *utilization rate* ; this took into effect both circulation and the number of copies of each title available. Evaluators then compared circulation statistics for late spring, before the summer program had begun, and early fall, after the summer program had ended and all circulation transactions were complete. Because of limitations of the NYPL circulation system, this calculation proved to be extremely labor intensive. Consequently, IMCS chose a subset of the reading list titles to study. This subset was Spanish language books, selected because it related to a target population and because it included all grade levels served by the summer reading program.

To complete the study, IMCS identified a similar library program at another library system (Onondaga County Public Library, Syracuse, New York), and determined the utilization rate for its Spanish language materials for comparison to CLASP statistics. IMCS considered Onondaga County Public Library to be a suitable institution for comparison to CLASP/NYPL because the two library systems shared several important variables: (1) both had special funding to increase circulation of foreign language materials; (2) both had an established program to carry out this objective; and (3) both were being compared after a similar period of time (about one year).

Findings from the study included:

- Spanish language books advertised as part of the CLASP summer reading program circulated more than the same titles in the non-CLASP libraries.
- This increase in circulation could not be accounted for by the fact that the CLASP libraries had more copies of these titles than the other branches.
- The Spanish language books circulated more times per copy than did Spanish books at another library (Onondaga County Public Library), even though the other library's circulation was based on a full year.
- The various promotional efforts of CLASP appeared to contribute to increases in the use of Spanish language books.

Micro-Case Evaluations

CLASP conducted several micro-case evaluations in conjunction with the summer 1993 and fall 1993 evaluations. These evaluations were in-depth examinations of CLASP programs determined to be particularly successful or in need of improvement. By interviewing program participants and those planning and conducting the programs, evaluators were able to determine the factors leading to the success (or preventing success, in the case of programs needing improvement). The activities selected for micro-evaluation can serve as "models" for other libraries and districts.

The summer 1993 evaluation included 16 micro-case evaluations. Programs examined were a workshop for day care center teachers, a kindergarten class visit, a treasure hunt activity (funded by a CLASP mini-grant), a Spanish language parents' workshop, a teachers' workshop series, and others. Seven micro-case evaluations performed in fall 1993 included a family literacy conference for community agencies, a library orientation, "superstart" preschool parents workshop, and others.

The micro-case studies resulted in the identification of critical success factors. While many were specific to the types of programs examined, some were more general and may be applied to other programs. Following is a sample of the critical success factors elicited through the micro-cases:

- More instruction in Spanish for staff and adequate amounts of Spanish language materials are needed to meet the new demand [created by a bilingual parents workshop].
- A core group of committed planners must cooperate, coordinate, and communicate freely and frequently [for a family literacy conference].
- Presenters must know the library needs and interests of elementary school children, their teachers, and their parents [for a library orientation].

- School and library administrators must cooperate and ensure support in program planning, promotion, and attendance [for a teachers' workshop series].

Complete reports of all micro-case evaluations are appended to the summer 1993 and fall 1993 reports (IMCS, September 30, 1993; IMCS, December 1993).

Interviews with School Administrators about Collaboration

In the spring of 1994, a team from IMCS conducted in-person interviews with eight senior-level administrative officers from the three CLASP school districts and three administrators at the New York City Board of Education. The team's intention was to understand the perspectives and attitudes of top school administrators toward collaborative efforts between schools and outside organizations in general and in the CLASP project specifically. IMCS presented the findings in a report, *CLASP: Collaboration Analysis: Interviews with School Administrators* (IMCS, May 1994), and also used the findings when conducting the in-depth study of school-library collaboration (described below).

Administrators considered projects with which they were familiar (other than CLASP) that involved collaboration between one or more schools and an external agency or organization. They named buy-in by district level administrators and programs aimed at meeting the instructional and curricular needs of the schools as the most important factors for successful collaboration. In addition, the group identified the following as necessary to successful collaboration: strong leadership; the setting of realistic goals; joint planning and decision making; adequate preparation and training; and sufficient resources.

The interviewees identified several barriers, including lack of planning time, lack of training, inadequate hours and staffing of the public library, physical barriers (e.g. distance, incompatible hours), bureaucratic barriers, lack of involvement of top administrators, "turf" issues, and not enough activities taking place in the schools.

Memo on Developing Models of CLASP Programming

IMCS submitted a memo to the CLASP Director (IMCS, May 31, 1994) to provide some assistance in beginning to carry out Goal 3: To develop a variety of models for cooperative services and institutional collaboration that could be replicated in other districts and eventually throughout New York City with public funding. (Previous evaluation reports had noted that little progress had been made in achieving Goal 3, possibly due to the lack of a unified effort to define what such models might look like.)

The memo identified three types of models, one at the political/institutional level, one at the school/community level, and one at the program/activity level. It recommended that the type of model be chosen according to the intended purpose. Throughout the

modeling process, the memo recommends: (a) selecting programs appropriate to local needs and interests; (b) adapting programs to meet local conditions; and (c) carrying out programs so that they are bound to succeed. In addition, it is important to consider: (a) the local political context as it affects the community at large, the public library and the schools; (b) the make-up of the community in terms of ethnicity, primary language, cultural values, etc.; and (c) the status of local schools in terms of resources and professional staff.

In-depth Study of School-Library Collaboration

Researchers undertook a literature search and analysis to help identify factors that may have contributed to successes and failures in CLASP school-library collaboration. The analysis also identified models of inter-organizational collaboration, and identified factors critical to successful collaboration between public sector institutions. *Report #6: Library Collaboration: A Literature Analysis to Aid the Evaluation of CLASP* (IMCS, August 1994b) presented these findings.

The research revealed no projects directly analogous to CLASP. It did find that many authors distinguished carefully between *collaboration* and *cooperation*. According to this scheme, collaboration involves mutual planning, a goal that neither institution could achieve alone, joint acquisition of funds, formal channels of communication, shared management and control, and equivalent contributions of time and resources. In contrast, cooperation involves short-term work with limited goals, one organization providing leadership and obtaining funds, occasional sharing of information, and benefits accruing primarily to one institution.

There was remarkable consistency in the literature (which included the fields of library science, education, and, to a lesser extent, public policy and business) regarding success factors and barriers in collaborative relationships. Common success factors included:

- A planning process that involves all partners equally and addresses accountability and evaluation;
- Goals which are realistic, measurable, and mutually beneficial to all partners;
- Demonstrated and consistent commitment of top leadership;
- An institutional climate that supports change;
- Positive attitude among individual staff and lack of jealousy;
- Mutual respect and trust among partner organizations and individuals;
- Active and equal participation by members of all institutions at all levels;

- Mid-level management that can work effectively with both top administrators and practitioners;
- Adequate support by material and human resources;
- Nurturing the relationship over time, though frequent feedback, public exposure, and acknowledgment of staff; and
- Excellent communication and the provision of formal channels of communication.

In addition, the study found that analyses of library-school cooperation typically cited lack of time, money, and staff as the most significant barriers. Negative attitude, including resentment and jealousy between school and public librarians, also appeared as a significant impediment to cooperation in this context.

The report concluded that while CLASP staff were successful in creating and making use of informal relationships with the schools, the relationship was one-sided. Schools did little more than participate passively in planning and goal setting. This failure to "own" the project affected top level management's involvement with long term concerns as well as individual staff members' contributions to programming. A fundamental barrier was the fact that material resources were allotted only to the library side of the relationship, and it was unclear what the schools themselves were expected to gain from the project. Finally, failure to establish evaluation measures and standards and unclear expectations for the stakeholders created confusion about accountability and project authority. These factors, as well as difficult institutional conditions, seemed to contribute to an overall indifference on the part of the schools and to the continuing difficulty CLASP had in overcoming barriers within the schools.

Workshops

The evaluation team designed and administered a number of workshops for CLASP and NYPL staff broadly related to key project themes and activities.

Innovative Programming for Youth

Sari Feldman, Head of the Onondaga County Public Library's Central Library and expert on library programs and services for children and young adults gave a workshop on May 5, 1994. The goal of the workshop was to present ideas for innovative programming, grounded in child development theory, that could be incorporated into the 1994 CLASP summer program and future CLASP endeavors. Ms. Feldman communicated frequently with the CLASP Director about content and method while preparing the workshop.

Workshop content included:

- A brief overview of the stages of child development, including the types of tasks preferred by children at each stage;
- A comparison of two types of activities: interactive activities and independent learning activities; and
- A range and variety of ideas for both interactive and independent learning activities for individuals and groups, with each idea described in the context of developmental stages.

CLASP librarians had several opportunities to share their personal anecdotes about innovative CLASP activities and successful experiences with children. Ms. Feldman provided each participant with a bibliography of resources for innovative programming ideas, as well as copies of the New York State summer reading program manual, which contained hundreds of ideas for activities related to the summer's reading theme, "Reading Around the Clock."

Linking Programs to the Curriculum Through Curriculum Mapping

Dr. Michael Eisenberg, Professor, School of Information Studies, Syracuse University, and member of the IMCS evaluation team, presented a workshop on September 2, 1994. The purpose was to focus on how to link CLASP activities and services directly with the school's curriculum.

Workshop content included:

- Review of the CLASP agenda including specific activities and services;
- Explanation of the curriculum mapping process, a technique for systematically gathering information on school curriculum;
- Practice in using the curriculum mapping technique;
- Discussion of curriculum attributes that are relevant to CLASP;
- Analysis of actual curriculum maps compiled from CLASP school districts to determine prime candidates for collaboration; and
- Discussion of tools for planning and documenting activities coordinated with classroom units.

The workshop was highly interactive and combined conceptual discussion with skills development. Some attendees expressed a concern with the feasibility of applying the

strategies presented to their situations as CLASP libraries, since they must provide service to so many schools.

Library Program Evaluation, Techniques and Issues

A workshop for CLASP staff on September 27, 1994 discussed the importance and use of evaluation in assessing library programs. Presented by Dr. Charles McClure, Distinguished Professor, Syracuse University School of Information Studies and member of the IMCS evaluation team, it provided an overview of the evaluation process, its relationship to strategic planning, and an overview of specific evaluation techniques that can be implemented in the public library setting. Dr. McClure also discussed the development of institutional data collection activities and management of information for program evaluation.

Specific objectives of the workshop included enabling the participants to:

- Describe the importance and role of evaluation of library services as part of the management process;
- Describe step-by-step procedures for evaluation of various aspects of library services;
- Describe the use and applications of various performance measures for library and information centers; and
- Understand the relationships between maintaining organizational descriptive statistics—in some type of a management information system—and conducting program evaluations.

McClure gave specific attention to developing evaluation strategies that could be used by CLASP during their current project activities.

Collaboration

The final workshop, on institutional collaboration, took place on October 7, 1994. Presenters were Dr. Ruth Small, Assistant Professor, Syracuse University School of Information Studies, and Dr. Jeffrey Katzer, Professor, Syracuse University School of Information Studies. Both are also members of the IMCS evaluation team. The workshop began with a brainstorming session in which participants described the characteristics of a "collaborative" relationship. The presenters then described the literature review process (see In-depth Study of School-Library Collaboration, above), including how collaboration was defined, the differences between collaboration and cooperation, and the dimensions of, critical success for, and barriers to collaboration. The presenters then described the results of IMCS' evaluation of collaboration within CLASP. The workshop concluded with a brainstorming session on ways in which CLASP could take the initiative to promote collaboration within the existing resources

(e.g., the need to develop better procedures for measuring what they're doing using the language and standards of outsiders).

Overview

Overall, these workshops provided CLASP/NYPL staff with an opportunity to consider a range of key issues and skills that could contribute to the ongoing success of CLASP activities during 1994-1995. A number of the participants commented to the instructors that the workshops provided them with information and insights that they could incorporate in future CLASP activities.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the period from February 1993 through October 1994, CLASP made excellent progress towards achieving the first project goal, establish library use. For the second goal—organize cooperative activities with schools and parents—some notable progress was evident, but structural difficulties in creating top-level connections with the schools hampered efforts. Less was achieved in terms of formally achieving the third goal (develop models of cooperative service).

In general, CLASP was highly successful in extending library programs and services to adults and children in Districts 6 (upper Manhattan), 8 (Bronx), and 31 (Staten Island) who might not otherwise have visited the library, attained a library card, or been exposed to public library offerings. CLASP was remarkable in being the first project to involve cooperation between a large urban public library system and public schools in a sustained and systematic manner. CLASP's ability to secure funding to carry it beyond its pilot phase attests to its success and its potential to empower libraries and schools in their mission to create a population of literate children and adults.

As CLASP evolves out of its pilot phase and expands its services and its reach to other districts, it will need to attend to these points if it is to achieve project objectives successfully. These conclusions may be useful to other library systems, school systems, and grantors who may wish to implement similar programs in other cities.

Conclusions

- CLASP programs reached thousands of adults and children who might not otherwise have attended the library, registered for a library card, or been exposed to public library services. This was due to: CLASP's ability to offer many more programs than libraries had previously been able to offer; these programs being offered in schools and other locations where underserved populations could be reached; and an increased variety of programming that would appeal to targeted populations.

- The impact of CLASP appeared to center on the *number* of activities offered, rather than the *type*. Similarly, librarians considered the ability of CLASP to provide great numbers of books and other resources not otherwise available to the branch libraries to be one of the most important benefits of the program.

- CLASP/NYPL succeeded in raising schools' and the larger community's awareness of the library and in bringing new adult and child users into the library. Users reported a high level of satisfaction with CLASP programs, and there was evidence of increased library use through additional activities and resources provided by CLASP.

- Teachers who were familiar with CLASP were enthusiastic about the program, cooperated in arranging and implementing activities, and tended to request repeat activities for their students. There was little evidence, however, that teachers were systematically involved in planning CLASP activities or that CLASP created links to school curriculum.

- All audiences judged CLASP activities to be very satisfying and interesting. This was true for all activities, all facets of satisfaction considered, and all audiences surveyed, and it was corroborated by teachers' and librarians' observations of the reactions of participants.

- CLASP activities did not appear to be any more satisfying for participants than non-CLASP activities. The greatest observable difference in satisfaction resulting from CLASP was on the part of NYPL librarians, who appreciated the increase in books and other resources funded by CLASP, as well as the presence of CLASP librarians to supplement their staff.

- Participants believed CLASP activities were beneficial in terms of providing information that would be useful at home, school, or work. Teachers, librarians, and parents felt the programs were educational, stimulated children to use the library, and encouraged reading for pleasure. To the extent that benefits could be assessed, CLASP activities did not appear to be any more beneficial than non-CLASP programs.

- CLASP succeeded in bringing many people of various ethnic backgrounds and different ages to library programs, especially when those programs were targeted specifically to those groups. Many disadvantaged people were introduced to the library through outreach to schools and other community sites. CLASP also had a positive impact on the equitable availability of resources across districts and communities within districts.

- Many of the programs, while they did attract underserved people to the library, did not create links to books, reading, or library services, raising the question of whether CLASP was taking full advantage of the opportunity to help people become regular library users.

- Both schools and libraries perceived an increase in school-library collaboration on the activity level as a result of CLASP, as well as improved rapport with the schools. However, collaboration usually emphasized joint scheduling rather than planning and goal setting, design, delivery, and evaluation of activities. Schools were often passive recipients of CLASP programs rather than active partners.

- There was no clear difference between CLASP and non-CLASP libraries in terms of the nature or success of their collaborative efforts. CLASP librarians made few attempts to link their services to school curriculum.

- There was disagreement about what constitutes "innovation." Many felt that an activity that is new or different is sufficiently innovative; others believed that "innovativeness" is useful only when applied to achieve a specific goal, such as increasing library use among a target group of underserved people or enriching school curriculum.

- Many people, not only the public but also most school personnel and even some librarians, were largely unaware of CLASP and did not associate CLASP-sponsored activities with the program.

Recommendations

- CLASP should continue efforts to improve its visibility through public relations campaigns, written accounts in professional journals, and consistent identification of all CLASP-funded activities and materials. CLASP librarians should actively promote their efforts and successes, both to strengthen visibility and credibility, and to win the support of key members of the community. CLASP should secure the support of top school officials, top library administration, and even city officials.

- CLASP should develop a better understanding of the information needs and interests of teachers and students in order to develop services and select resources that directly supplement established educational goals. Librarians may wish to employ a method such as curriculum mapping to systematically gather information about curriculum and then use such information in designing programs that are relevant to what is being taught in schools.

- CLASP must ensure that collaboration goes beyond joint scheduling; they must work side-by-side with teachers in setting a program direction and planning activities that reflect joint planning, mutual benefit, and relevance to all audiences. Librarians and teachers should work together to bridge the gap between these two closely allied professions with an eye toward their mutual goal: improving literacy among youth.

- CLASP programs and activities should support the educational goals of CLASP by relating to the reading and information needs of youth, teens, and adults. If CLASP is to improve literacy and increase library use among its target audiences, programs should not only be interesting, motivating, and satisfying; they must also make some connection to books, literature, information, and the ongoing services and resources of the library.

MOVING FORWARD

The CLASP effort has been an important one in learning how to link libraries, schools, and local communities together for new and better social/educational services. Ultimately, solving urban social problems requires local strategies, with local agencies working together and coordinating their efforts. Such efforts, however, must have clear and realistic objectives, adequate resources, and dedicated staff and administrators. As shown in this project, libraries and schools can make significant contributions to strengthening local communities, promoting education, and offering a range of support to the community not otherwise available.

The support of DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund for CLASP activities resulted in a number of direct benefits and impacts described throughout this report. The effort also demonstrated the importance of such a project to the New York City government and resulted in ongoing resource support to the New York Public Library to continue CLASP. As such, CLASP can be seen as an ongoing experiment in how best to provide street-level involvement in the community by local libraries and schools.

The formal evaluation of CLASP by Information Management Consultant Services, Inc., resulted in a number of important findings and lessons for future efforts. Funding agencies wishing to work with local governments, schools, and libraries in similar projects need to be aware of a range of issues related to collaboration among agencies such as those that participated in CLASP. Libraries and schools can also learn from the experiences of CLASP as they work to implement community-based educational programs. As suggested earlier in this report, understanding the political context in which the project will operate, providing incentives and rewards to participating agencies, and obtaining ongoing feedback and assessment of project activities are essential if collaboration is to be successful. Equally important is the involvement of dedicated and committed staff, such as the CLASP librarians, who indicated very clearly that they cared about the local community and wanted to improve it.

The project also identified the complexity of successful collaborations among local institutions such as schools, libraries, community groups, and government. Successfully leveraging resources to affect multiple organizations at the local level is a critical area for ongoing developmental work. Lessons from the CLASP effort should be integrated into future collaborative projects. Funding sources such as the DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund should continue to support efforts such as CLASP. Indeed, support for projects such as CLASP is essential if individuals in local communities are to be productive members of society.

Efforts such as the CLASP initiative must continue. Libraries are a key institution to serve both as a community catalyst and service provider in improving educational and social services in the local community. As shown in this project, library programs can become a significant link between community members, the schools, local government,

and a range of educational opportunities which otherwise would not be available to the public.

As initiatives such as CLASP continue to evolve, librarians, local officials, and fundors will continue to learn how best to meet the needs of the community and empower community members to be successful and productive members of society. Despite the willingness of many libraries to serve in this role, they require resources, training, and political support from local government to be successful. The project clearly demonstrated the importance of the library in providing a range of community-based programs and services.

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APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

Dimensions of Study

The three objectives guiding the evaluation included objectives relating to public libraries and public schools; to children and their families; and to public libraries and their communities (see pages 5-6). IMCS used the dimensions, or themes, defined below to define and assess the objectives. All dimensions did not apply to each evaluation activity or each period of study. Rather, the specific objectives of each evaluation determined the choice of dimensions. Dimensions studied at some point in the evaluation period include the following:

- **Extensiveness:** Number, type, and locations of CLASP activities and attendance at those activities. (Studied in summer 1993, fall 1993, and summer 1994.)

- **Satisfaction:** Participants' affective reactions to CLASP activities, including the degree to which they believed CLASP activities were meeting their needs. (Studied in summer 1993 and summer 1994.)

- **Benefit:** The way(s) in which CLASP activities contributed to the quality of life for participants. (Studied in summer 1993 and summer 1994.)

- **Effectiveness:** Extent to which the activity achieved the goals of CLASP. (Studied in summer 1993 and fall 1993. For fall 1993, this dimension included participants' satisfaction—their affective reactions; and benefits—the effects of CLASP on the lives of the participants. For the summer 1993 and summer 1994 evaluations, satisfaction and benefits were considered separately.)

- **Management:** Extent to which CLASP was well managed and well marketed. This theme included the decision making process, the organizational structure, the delineated authority and responsibilities within the organization, the cost-effectiveness of the program, and documentation supporting the structure. (Studied in summer 1993 and fall 1993.)

- **Improvement:** Ways to maintain, correct, or improve CLASP procedures or activities, *from respondents' point of view*. (Studied in summer 1993 and fall 1993.)

- **Critical Success Factors:** Extent to which the presence/absence of a factor determined the success/failure of an activity, *from respondents' point of view.* (Studied in fall 1993.)

- **Innovativeness:** Extent to which CLASP instituted new approaches or new programs. (Studied in fall 1993 and summer 1994. For summer 1994, this dimension was considered under the scope of "improvement.")

- **Collaboration:** Extent to which CLASP staff worked together with teachers, administrators, parents, and community organizations to further the goals of the project for the benefit of their mutual clientele. The collaboration dimension included the diversity of participants, decision-making authority within respective organizations, institutional linkages, and effectiveness of communication among members. (Studied in fall 1993 and summer 1994. For summer 1994, this dimension was considered under the scope of "improvement.")

- **Diversity**: Extent to which CLASP programs drew audiences representative of the service districts, particularly underserved populations including older children, at-risk students, people of various ethnic backgrounds, and people of different ages. (Introduced for the summer 1994 evaluation, and considered under the scope of "improvement.")

Evaluation Design

During the course of the overall evaluation, the IMCS team gathered data on a range of CLASP activities from a variety of sources, including school program administrators, CLASP and NYPL managers, students, parents, teachers, librarians, CLASP staff, public librarians, school librarians, and community members. Focus groups, questionnaires, individual and group interviews, and observations offered multiple data collection measures.

IMCS utilized many data collection methods including broad-scale, focused-scale, and micro-scale approaches, defined below. To gather longitudinal data and allow for comparison, the team used control groups, repeated measures, and designation of capacity-demonstrating activities (i.e. "improved" activities selected for observation by the CLASP Director, summer 1994).

1. Broad-scale Approach: Used to economically obtain data from a large number of people or organizations. This method employs a breadth of coverage at the expense of depth, meaning that broad-scale approaches often do not contribute much to a "rich" understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

   Evaluators conducted telephone surveys to determine the knowledge of and perception of CLASP, the extent of collaboration between school librarians and CLASP staff, the attendance at CLASP programs, and the assessment of their effects. Researchers analyzed existing institutional records, activity logs, and circulation data for information related to attendance and use of materials.

2. Focused-scale Approach: Used to capture a more thorough and insightful appraisal of the phenomenon under consideration. Focused-scale methods, which are costly in time, provide information about how respondents react to and assess their interactions with the phenomenon under investigation.

   Researchers conducted group and individual interviews and also observed meetings and programs to gather in-depth data from participants in CLASP activities, advisory committees, and management.

3. Micro-scale Approach: Provides the individual case studies of unique or important successes or failures; this approach contributes to the immediate improvement of the project as well as longer term transferability.

   Unique and/or important cases of success or failure required an in-depth approach. An examination of programs or activities which worked particularly well, or were less successful, contributed exemplars for consideration in the development of future CLASP programs.

Sampling

Summer 1993. The summer program served approximately 40 sites, including public libraries, summer primary and intermediate schools, summer camps, and a variety of community organizations (see Table 4, below). IMCS evaluators distributed user surveys to CLASP staff with directions for administering them to CLASP participants. Researchers selected key individuals (e.g. librarians, teachers, community agency personnel, CLASP staff) and groups participating in CLASP activities for both in-person and telephone interviews. Evaluators observed 15 CLASP activities taking place approximately mid-way through the summer program.

The CLASP Director helped identify six sites as comparable to CLASP libraries so that researchers could collect data for control comparisons. The sites included two in both the Bronx and Manhattan, and two in another borough. (It was necessary to select from another borough because all Staten Island libraries participated in CLASP.) Recommendations emerging from interviews lead to the selection of 16 program activities for micro-evaluation (i.e. in-depth examination of selected programs to determine reasons for success or areas needing improvement).

Fall 1993. The fall 1993 CLASP program held activities at community schools, at public libraries, and at a variety of community organizations (see Table 4, below). Selected individuals (students, teachers, parents, librarians, service providers, etc.) and groups participated in in-person interviews or telephone interviews after attending activities.

Evaluators contacted three public librarians who had participated in telephone interviews during the summer 1993 evaluation for a longitudinal survey in fall 1993. Evaluators also conducted telephone interviews with nine school librarians/cluster

teachers on the basis of their familiarity with CLASP activities or mini-grants (i.e. awards given to teachers in public or non-public schools to conduct special programs consistent with the goals of CLASP). The evaluation also included seven micro-case evaluations selected from recommendations elicited from telephone interviews and on-site observations.

Evaluation Activity/Instrument	Total	Summer 1993			Fall 1993			Summer 1994		
		Dist. 6	Dist. 8	Dist 31	Dist. 6	Dist. 8	Dist. 31	Dist. 6	Dist. 8	Dist. 31
User Survey —Youth	706	274 (16 activities)	123 (7 activities)	309 (20 activities)						
User Survey —Adult	45	31 (5 activities)	7 (2 activities)	7 (2 activities)						
Phone Survey —CLASP Institutions	13	2	5	6						
Phone Survey —Control Institutions	6	2	2	2						
Focus Group —Youth	6	1	0	5				1	1	3
Focus Group —Adults	2	0	2	0						
Interview Guide —Parents	3	0	0	3				1	2	2
Interview Guide —Staff	23	7	3	13				2	3	3
Micro-Evaluation Case Studies	23	3	5	8	1	3	3			
Observation —Activities	38	6	2	7	4	2	4	3	5	5
Observation and Focus Groups—Advisory Comm.	3				1	1	1			
Focus Group —Management	1*				*	*	*			
Interviews —School Admin.	2				0	1	1			
Telephone Interviews —School-based	11				2 + 1 control	2	5 + 1 control			
Library Longitudinal Survey	6				1 + 1 control	1 + 1 control	1 + 1 control			

* Management focus group interview included all three districts

Table 4. Evaluation Activities by Evaluation Period and District

Telephone interviews with three school librarians and three public librarians who were not affiliated with the CLASP program provided comparative data. These librarians

were from districts in the Bronx selected because they generally matched the characteristics of each CLASP district. To obtain longitudinal data, evaluators interviewed a control group of public librarians who had participated in summer 1993 telephone interviews.

The evaluation included three focus group interviews conducted at CLASP advisory committee meetings (one per district), as well as school program administrator interviews from District 8 and District 31.

Evaluators observed ten CLASP activities presented in October and November of 1993. These observations included parent workshops, CLASP librarian visits to classes and community organizations, an after-school program, and a mini-grant-sponsored school symposium. Altogether, the IMCS team observed four activities in Staten Island, four in northern Manhattan, and two in the Bronx.

Summer 1994. During one week of on-site evaluation, the IMCS team observed 13 activities (see Table 4.) The CLASP Director designated six "capacity" activities (two from each district) as exemplars of innovativeness, collaboration, and/or diversity which would demonstrate CLASP's capacity to improve based on past recommendations. IMCS selected seven other "non-capacity" activities (i.e. "ordinary" activities similar to those offered in the past) based on district and type of activity, with an eye toward providing the richest and broadest representation possible during the on-site evaluation period. Altogether, the team observed two capacity activities and one non-capacity activity in District 6; two capacity activities and three non-capacity activities in District 8; and two capacity activities and three non-capacity activities in District 31.

Instruments

IMCS designed ten data collection instruments at the start of the evaluation. They also designed other instruments but held them in draft form until the experiences of the first formal evaluation (summer 1993) could be applied and the instruments refined. The initial instruments, as defined in *Report #2: Instruments, Site Selection, Monthly Reports* (IMCS, June 18, 1993), included:

1. Mail Survey of Activities, Youth Version (English and Spanish);
2. Mail Survey of Activities, Adult Version (English and Spanish);
3. Phone Survey, Participating (CLASP) Institutions;
4. Phone Survey, Control Institutions;
5. Phone Survey, Neighborhood (English and Spanish);
6. Interview Guide, Staff Version;
7. Interview Guide, Patron Version (English and Spanish);
8. Interview Guide, Neighborhood (English and Spanish);
9. Observation Guide, Activities; and
10. Micro-Evaluation (Cases)—Data Fields Description.

As the evaluation evolved, IMCS revised existing instruments and designed new instruments in order to achieve the objectives of each evaluation period. New instruments included:

11. Focus Group, Adult Version;
12. Focus Group, Youth Version;
13. User Survey, Adult Version (English and Spanish);
14. User Survey, Youth Version (English and Spanish);
15. CLASP/NYPL Group Interview;
16. Advisory Committee Focus Group Discussion Questions;
17. Interview Guide, Advisory Group Follow-up;
18. Interview Guide, School Administrator Version;
19. Interview Guide, Teacher/Administrator Version;
20. Telephone Survey, Participating Schools;
21. Telephone Survey, Non-participating Schools;
22. Observation Guide, Advisory Committee Meetings;
23. Advisory Group Questionnaire; and
24. Interview Guides, Outside Talent.

All instruments used during summer 1993, fall 1993, and summer 1994 fell into three basic categories: user surveys, interview guides, and observation guides.

- User Surveys. User surveys assessed participants' opinions about the satisfaction, benefit, and effectiveness of CLASP programs. There were two versions of the survey, one for youth and one for adults. Both were available in both English and Spanish. The surveys were designed to be self-administered, and contained either "yes/no" questions (for youth) or a simple Likert-type scale (for adults). Because the youth had a wide range of reading abilities, CLASP staff or members of the evaluation team read the questions aloud.

- Interview Guides. IMCS designed several different instruments to collect data through interviews. The interviews targeted staff at CLASP and non-CLASP settings, program participants, and management from both CLASP and NYPL. Personal and telephone interview guides included a set of scripted questions representing each dimension under study. Focus group interviews were held with: (a) small groups of individuals who had just participated in a CLASP activity; and (b) small groups of NYPL or CLASP administrators or advisory committee members. Interviewers asked participants to discuss their reaction to the programs they had just attended. They asked management and advisory committee members about cost-effectiveness, management, collaboration, etc. Finally, evaluators used micro-evaluation case study guides to interview people in depth about CLASP activities that were determined to be either highly successful or in need of improvement.

- Observation Guides. Evaluators used observation guides to record information relating to the study dimensions, or themes, for each activity observed. During summer 1993 and fall 1993, sites of observations often coincided with those where interviews were conducted.

IMCS pre-tested all instruments, with both English- and Spanish-speaking populations when appropriate. They carried out the pre-testing in communities with children participating in similar summer public library programs, with parents of participants, and with public librarians in upstate New York and New Jersey. Most of the pre-testing occurred during the spring of 1993, before the first formal evaluation. The pretests resulted in changes to vocabulary and wording of items in the interview guides. IMCS also revised the observation guide as an easy-to-use checklist. Members of the IMCS evaluation team involved in data collection attended training sessions that emphasized interviewing and observation procedures and techniques.

The evaluation team administered all instruments except the user surveys, which were designed to be readily understood and easily self-administered by users. Questions on all instruments related to one or more of the evaluation dimensions (see Tables 5, 6, and 7, below). Copies of all data collection instruments used during the evaluation are appended to the individual evaluation reports (IMCS, September 30, 1993; IMCS, December 1993; IMCS, August 1994a).

Summer 1993. Instruments used for the summer 1993 evaluation included two user surveys, seven different interview guides (including the micro-evaluation case study guide), and the activity observation guide. In addition to the instruments listed below, monthly activity logs were used to collect extensiveness data.

Data Collection Instrument	Dimensions of Study: Summer 1993					
	Extensiveness	Satisfaction	Benefits	Effectiveness	Improvement	Management
User Survey —Youth Version		•	•	•		
User Survey —Adult Version		•	•	•		
Phone Survey —CLASP Library	•	•	•	•	•	•
Phone Survey —Control Library	•	•	•	•		•
Focus Group —Youth Version	•	•	•		•	•
Focus Group —Adult Version		•	•		•	•
Interview Guide —Parent Version		•	•			
Interview Guide —Staff Version	•	•	•		•	•
Micro-evaluation Case					•	
Observation Guide		•	•	•	•	•

Table 5. Data Collection Instruments by Dimension of Study, Summer 1993

Fall 1993. Sixteen instruments were used during the fall evaluation. Of these, seven were new and nine were modifications of summer evaluation instruments. Time constraints did not allow all questions to be asked in some evaluation activities. Several of the new instruments gathered information from CLASP and NYPL management and advisory committee members regarding cost-effectiveness, critical success factors, collaboration, and other "higher level" concerns.

Data Collection Instrument	Dimensions of Study: Fall 1993						
	Collaboration	Management	Innovativeness	Extensiveness †	Effectiveness	Improvements	Critical Success Factors
CLASP/NYPL Group Interview Guide *	•	•	•		•	•	
Advisory Comm. Group Focus Group Disc. Questions *	•	•				•	
Advisory Group Phone Interviews *	•	•					•
School Admin. Interviews *	•	•	•		•	•	•
CLASP Schools Phone Interviews *	•	•	•		•	•	•
Non-CLASP Schools Phone Interviews *	•	•	•		•	•	•
Staff Interviews	•	•	•		•		
Teacher/Admin. Interviews	•	•	•		•		
CLASP Librarian Phone Interviews	•	•	•		•	•	
Control Librarian Phone Interviews	•	•	•		•	•	
Youth Focus Group Interviews					•	•	
Adult Focus Group Interviews					•	•	
Micro-Case Studies	•	•	•		•	•	•
Advisory Comm. Meeting Obs. Guide *	This instrument was used to record observations on the agenda, purpose, and leadership displayed at the meeting; also to record the extent to which discussion was one-sided or two-sided, and to track the group's contribution to CLASP management and decision making.						
Activities Observation Guide	•	•	•		•		•
Advisory Group Questionnaire*	Used to collect demographic information on advisory group participants, and to follow up on questions which were not discussed in the advisory committee focus group interviews due to insufficient time.						

* Indicates new instrument

† Extensiveness data were derived from activity logs kept by each district

Table 6. Data Collection Instruments by Dimensions of Study, Fall 1993

Summer 1994. Evaluators collected data by observing activities, interviewing staff individually, and interviewing participants in focus groups. The evaluation team used revised versions of existing data collection instruments. These included interview guides for patrons (parents), for youth (in focus groups), and for staff; and activity

observation guides. IMCS designed separate versions of both the staff interview guide and the activity observation guide for use in capacity and non-capacity activities. In general, the only questions retained from the summer 1993 evaluation instruments related to satisfaction and benefit. All instruments included questions related to innovation, diversity, and collaboration—the primary focus of this evaluation effort.

Activity records (Activity/Encounter Forms) for the month of July supplied extensiveness data. CLASP staff submitted these directly to IMCS.

Evaluation Instrument	Dimensions of Study: Summer 1994					
	Satisfaction	Benefits	Extensiveness *	Innovativeness	Diversity	Collaboration
Interview Guides —Parent Version	•	•	--	•	•	•
Interview Guides —CLASP Staff	•	•		•	•	•
Interview Guides —NYPL Staff	•	•		•	•	•
Interview Guides —Outside Talent	•	•		•	•	•
Focus Group —Youth	•	•		•	•	•
Focus Group —Adult	•	•		•	•	•
Observation Guide —Activities	•	•		•	•	•

* Extensiveness data were derived from Activity/Encounter Forms

Table 7. Data Collection Instruments by Dimensions of Study, Summer 1994

Limitations and Constraints

The most significant constraint encountered during the evaluation process was the timing and initiation of the evaluation effort. To be most effective, the evaluation component should have been formulated at the conception of the project and implemented in the first year.

Summer 1993. The major issue affecting the design and implementation of this evaluation was the fact that CLASP's program plan was developed and initiated more than one year before the selection of the evaluation team and development of an evaluation plan. This affected the design and implementation in terms of:

- Randomization. Evaluating an ongoing program prohibits a full-randomized field trial and, therefore, affects the types of conclusions that state that the program was the cause of the observed results. IMCS' use of data from "control" (i.e. non-CLASP) institutions compensated for this shortcoming in part.

- Comparable data. Not all CLASP institutions collected comparable information or kept consistent records through the course of the program. In addition, some data were incomplete or missing. In *Report #2: Instruments, Site Selection, Monthly Reports* (June 18, 1993), IMCS recommended a more organized, consistent and comprehensive reporting format for the CLASP activity logs. The CLASP administration then agreed to adopt a similar format for programs beginning in the fall of 1993.

- Site-based sampling. Because so many of the summer CLASP activities were held at non-library sites (e.g. schools, community agencies) and because may CLASP schools and libraries within each district did not conduct CLASP activities during the summer, sampling for the summer evaluation could not be site-based. Instead, sampling was based on representation of a range of *activities* sponsored in each district during the summer program.

In addition, last minute planning and decision making for summer 1993 CLASP programs and activities resulted in considerable uncertainty for the evaluation team as to what programs would be offered, where they would be offered, or when they would be offered. This affected sampling and logistical decisions.

Fall 1993. Several constraints affected the design and implementation of data collection activities for fall 1993:

- The CLASP Director resigned late in the summer of 1993, and the position was vacant at the time evaluation activities needed to be scheduled. While other staff in the organization proved helpful, frequent rescheduling of activities and meetings made planning difficult.

- The delay in the opening of New York Public Schools in September 1993 meant that the scheduling of fall data collection could not be done until late September.

- Scheduling school-based interviews proved difficult because desired respondents could not be contacted directly.

- Meetings and activities were frequently rescheduled, and some activities selected for observation were canceled with little or no notice.

- IMCS was unable to observe any teacher workshops due to schedule changes and cancellations.

Summer 1994. The summer 1994 data collection process was less comprehensive than the summer 1993 effort, primarily because the evaluation focused on the particular issue of improvement, rather than a more complete assessment. On-site observation was more limited in scope, and there were few difficulties in obtaining and analyzing data during the week on-site. One concern was that the extensiveness data might be incomplete because outsourced programs (i.e. programs given by non-library people hired to present them), which were not always attended by CLASP staff, appeared to have been inconsistently reported through Activity/Encounter Forms.

In summary, IMCS conducted a study that was *both* broad and rich by using a wide range of data collection techniques, and by soliciting the views of youth and adult participants, librarians, teachers, school administrators, CLASP and NYPL administrators, community leaders, advisory committee members, and others in the evaluation process. Because the original methodology allowed for expansion and revision, IMCS was able to alter the study method as needed to reflect the primary concerns of DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund during each evaluation period. Being brought "on-board" over one year into the program was a handicap in designing an evaluation methodology; IMCS compensated for this as well as possible and collected data which reflected the impact of CLASP and the program's success in reaching its three original goals.